

FIRE

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DOWN ↓

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THE 5 THINGS YOU MUST KNOW

to Ensure Fire Safety on Campus

BY ED BAUER

Ensuring fire safety on university campuses is of paramount importance, with the well-being of students, faculty, and valuable assets at stake. Fire sprinkler systems serve as the first line of defense against potential disasters, underscoring the need for meticulous maintenance and proactive measures. In this comprehensive guide, we will explore five key strategies tailored to university personnel for optimizing fire sprinkler system maintenance and enhancing overall campus safety. Let's get started.

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Look at your testing procedures.

A first step in preventative fire safety is to streamline remote testing procedures. Compliance with industry standards such as NFPA 13 and NFPA 25 necessitates regular testing of sprinkler water flow alarm devices. However, conventional testing methods often prove time consuming and labor intensive, especially in multi-story buildings or expansive campus facilities. AGF Manufacturing's RemoteTEST solution offers cutting-edge technology that revolutionizes testing procedures by enabling remote activation of sprinkler system tests through various control mechanisms. By facilitating efficient testing across the entire campus, this innovative approach not only enhances operational readiness but

also minimizes costs associated with manual inspections.

Be mindful of corrosion.

The second step when it comes to fire safety and sprinkler checks is to combat any threats of corrosion. Corrosion poses a significant risk to the integrity and functionality of fire sprinkler systems over time. Automatic air vents offer a proactive solution by continuously venting trapped air, thereby reducing the conditions conducive to corrosion. NFPA 13 has required air vents on new systems since 2016, but older systems can still benefit from retrofitting air vents into the system. By implementing robust corrosion prevention measures, university personnel can extend the lifespan of their

sprinkler systems and mitigate the risk of operational failures during emergencies.

Be sure your campus has implemented corrosion monitoring protocols. Early detection of corrosion is paramount for effective maintenance planning. Corrosion monitors are not required but can identify an issue before pinhole leaks occur. A CORRinSITE corrosion monitor provides a simple yet reliable means of monitoring corrosion levels in both wet and dry sprinkler systems. This non-powered device serves as an early warning system, alerting maintenance teams to corrosion progression and facilitating targeted interventions to prevent system deterioration. By integrating corrosion monitoring into routine maintenance practices, universities can safeguard their fire sprinkler systems and minimize the risk of costly water damage and repairs.

Safeguard against freezing hazards. Every university should have a protocol for safeguarding against freezing hazards. In regions prone to freezing temperatures, auxiliary drains in dry sprinkler systems are susceptible to ice formation, leading to potential system malfunctions. The technology in products called COLLECTanDRAIN offers solutions for the most common issues that plague facility managers. Auxiliary drains can be retrofitted with water detectors for notification when service is needed. Heated cabinets that house the drum drip provide protection against freezing and can be drained remotely or automatically, saving hours of labor, and reducing the risk of downtime and costly repairs. By proactively safeguarding against freezing hazards, university personnel can ensure the uninterrupted functionality of their sprinkler systems, even in harsh weather conditions.

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Possibly your budget doesn't include smart options for your auxiliary drains, but the addition of a tool called the FLOODEliminator offers an economical option of added protection if an auxiliary drain were to fail. This small device is installed above a drum drip and snaps closed from the pressure of water when the dry valve is tripped. This prevents water from flowing out of a broken auxiliary drain and prevents a flood and the associated water damage. The FLOODEliminator is easily retrofitted onto existing drains and doesn't require power or maintenance.

Deterrence of Vandalism with Enhanced Security Measures. Public access areas, such as parking structures, are vulnerable to vandalism, posing a threat to the integrity of fire sprinkler systems. Anti-trip plates and locking kits for auxiliary drains serve as effective deterrents against unauthorized access and tampering. By enhancing security measures, university personnel can mitigate the risk of vandalism and ensure the reliability of their sprinkler systems in critical areas. Additionally, clear signage

and education initiatives can raise awareness among campus stakeholders about the importance of preserving fire safety infrastructure.

The effective maintenance of fire sprinkler systems is paramount for ensuring the safety and well-being of university campuses. By adopting the strategies outlined in this guide and leveraging innovative solutions, university personnel can enhance the resilience and reliability of their fire sprinkler infrastructure. From streamlining remote testing procedures to implementing proactive corrosion prevention measures, each strategy plays a crucial role in safeguarding campus communities and assets against fire-related risks. By prioritizing fire safety and embracing a proactive approach to maintenance, universities can create safer environments for learning, research, and collaboration.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Ed Bauer has been in publishing for over twenty years. In his early career years, he worked on the staff at Mount Union College and for the last twelve years as publisher and managing partner at Flaherty Media has been privileged to tour many private higher education campuses and talk with numerous staff members who manage these multiple building facilities. He can be reached at ed@pupnmag.com.

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